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# At Home with Hurwitz

## Dip Into Summer... In Your Own Backyard

With Lauren Hurwitz

What's better than visiting the town or club pool over the summer? Enjoying a pool in your very own backyard! The demand for versatile outdoor space and the desire for pools has risen exponentially over the past few years. According to the Pool and Hot Tub Alliance, 2020 saw 3,689 new residential inground pool sales in New York State. Should you decide to join the thousands of homeowners who recently constructed a new pool, a good first step is to call your local building department to learn about any set-back rules that determine how close to and from your property line you can build along with any other zoning regulations. Then consider the size of your lot, how big of a pool you want to build followed by when you're looking to use your pool. Karen Larson, Co-Founder of Soake Pools says, "If you want to use your pool all year

long, a small pool is the clear choice since it can be easily insulated and covered to minimize heat loss," says Larson. "A small pool offers all of the benefits of a large pool but without the difficult maintenance and high energy costs. Our pools can be used all year round. They are designed to be cool in the summer and warm in the winter – a pretty unique idea for the colder winter temperatures in Westchester County. A precast concrete plunge pool offers the additional benefits of cost and time savings, which our clients really love."

When creating this backyard oasis, consider the durability and ease of maintaining a pool. Larson recommends a concrete body finished with a porcelain tile interior on her pools to check these two boxes and adds "large format porcelain tiles are elegant and have a natural feeling aesthetic. Overall, a winning look!" The maintenance costs can vary and are directly related to the volume of water, according to Larson. "A large pool is harder to cover and requires more energy and chemicals to keep it clean. A small pool, like a Soake Plunge Pool, typically uses 85% less energy because the volume of water is so much less."

Like anything else in a home, not all inground pools are created equally. "Gunite or custom, built onsite pools allow more flexibility in shape and size, but disrupt the backyard for a much longer period of time. On the other hand, precast concrete plunge pools save weeks to months of onsite construction, and are built in a controlled environment that is able to maintain strict quality control and doesn't rely on the weather for production to continue," says Larson.

In terms of trends, many homeowners are opting for saltwater pools which Larson says is actually a type of chlorine pool but "the difference is that in a saltwater pool, chlorine is generated from the salt. This all happens inside a salt-chlorine generator. Not only is a salt-water pool more environmentally friendly, but the water feels softer and less irritating." Regardless of the path you choose, having a pool is sure to add value to the resale of your home and provide you with priceless summer memories, and in some cases, year-round!



*Photo: Andover, Mass. home featuring a plunge pool by Soake Pools. Photography by Murphy Foto Imagery.*

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